

City of Newton
Crime Prevention Commission

(Alternatively referred to below as CPC or the Commission)

Minutes of Meeting – Wednesday, February 19, 2014

7:00pm - Newton Police Headquarters, 1321 Washington Street, West Newton, MA 02465.

Active Commissioners Present: Frank Wolpe (Chair), Richard Catrambone, Debra Darcy and Bernard Goulding

Commissioners' Consultants Present: Ken Brown, Barbara Wong, and Abby M. Wolpe

Ex-Officio Members Present: NPD Lt. Bruce Apotheker

Guests Present: Anil Adyanthaya, President, Newton Upper Falls Area Council

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Frank Wolpe, Chair who welcomed all present, including our 1st time guest, Anil Adyanthaya, President of the Newton Upper Falls Area Council. Anil shared information about the operations of his group and welcomed collaboration with the Commission as a collegial stakeholder in the community.

NPD Compstat Report: Lt. Bruce Apotheker delivered the monthly Comstat Report for the period ended February 9, 2014. Overall, crime was down by 31% for the year to date with burglaries down from 31 to 20, larcenies down from 56 to 39. In two sub-categories, larcenies from a motor vehicle dropped from 26 to 9; and residential burglaries dropped from 22 to 17 year to date. Speculation for the good results followed; bad weather emerged as a possibility!

Second Step and the Newton North Little League Team: The meeting then moved to a discussion of Commission Consultant Ken Brown's emerging offer to help Second Step, a women's domestic violence residential sheltering enterprise. His offer for the children of residents is a unique opportunity for them to be welcomed, potentially at no cost, into one of the most uplifting youth activities around – playing baseball with their peers as members of Newton North Little League Team. Ken is one of the

coaches and leaders of the Team. If needed, the youngsters will have all fees waived. If needed, uniforms and equipment will be provided at no charge.

As Ken said, his organization is

“Willing to take any of the kids from the women's shelter to play baseball. Our program is for kids who are 4-12 years of age.. We can provide them whatever they need. Maybe it would give them a change of environment and something to look forward to. They do not have to have any prior baseball experience and we would allow them to play at no cost if needed.”

Sarah Perry, Executive Director, Second step, assures us that she will contact Ken; and copy us on correspondence. Apparently, security for the children is a bridge to cross. We shall soon see if this can be worked out. The Chair will visit the Second Step office in Newtonville on March 3rd to establish ways the Commission can deepen its relationship and help advance both our missions to help those in Newton who are served.

Neighborhood Organized Resource Groups (NORGs) – The Chair introduced Commission Consultant Sami O'Reilly's idea for helping the community offer NORGs. (called NORGs unless we come up with a better name!) At the March 19th meeting, she will discuss it in greater detail.



Why NORGs, she asks? Clearly, it a legitimate question to ask whether neighbors might accept the challenge to be stewards of certain neighborhood resources. Since the presence of traditional "watches" has come to mean "crime is here;" many communities, like Newton, for obvious reasons, will not accept such a message. However, NORGs may be the acceptable alternative. .

Indeed, some traditional "neighborhood watches" in low crime cities have already migrated to becoming what are called "neighborhood interest groups," with a broader mission. Thus, it may be easier to cultivate activists within neighborhoods to "watch" over the usual community resources, thus ensuring they are safe and well-maintained. Parks, streets, open spaces, and community buildings are typically the resources we speak of when we discuss what they are "watching".

The City of Newton Suicide Prevention Group – Commissioner Rich Catrambone and the Chair reported on the Commission's efforts to collaborate with a new City Hall group called *Newton Cares*, which is the same logo adopted by this Crime Prevention Commission in 2012, but not widely advertised. They will make good use of it.

Commissioner Catrambone also announced that there will be a Parent's Night at Newton South High School on April 4th to discuss all these matters. CPC Members are encouraged to spread the word and attend.

Other Business / Agenda Building / Meeting Adjournment – There was no new business so the Chair called for Commissioners and Consultants to report on on-going projects, which they did, etc.

On a motion made by the Chair, and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.